

Local county contact information:

**California Department
of Child Support Services**

**FREE
SERVICES!**



Helpful guide to resolving problems with your child support case



Gray Davis, Governor
State of California

Grantland Johnson, Secretary
Health and Human Services Agency

Curtis L. Child, Director
California Department of Child Support Services



New Improved Services

The California Department of Child Support Services has given additional staff and resources to each county Department of Child Support Services to improve customer service. The services are free of charge.

Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson helps you resolve issues with your child support case, explains your rights and responsibilities, and tells you the ways you can get child support services.

Responsibilities:

- To help you with child support issues.
- To assist you in understanding the complaint process before, during, and after the complaint is filed.
- To assist you in preparing for a State Hearing.

You can file a complaint if you are not satisfied with the assistance you are receiving from the county Department of Child Support Services in resolving your child support issues.



Complaint Resolution

- Custodial parties or noncustodial parents can file a complaint with the county Department of Child Support Services.
- You should give the county your contact information, the case name and number, and the issue you want resolved.
- Your complaint may be about any county Department of Child Support Services or Franchise Tax Board action or inaction except for complaints about court orders, custody or visitation.
- You must make the complaint within 90 days of when you knew about the problem.
- The county Department of Child Support Services will have someone other than the caseworker involved with your complaint investigate and try to resolve your complaint.
- If the complaint is out of that county's area, it will be sent to the right county within five days.
- The county Department of Child Support Services must give you a written response to your complaint within 30 days of when they received your complaint.
- The investigator will tell the county Department of Child Support Services or Franchise Tax Board what they must do to resolve the issue.
- The county Department of Child Support Services will send a written notice to you with information on your rights to a State Hearing, if you are not satisfied with the county's response.

State Hearings

The State Hearing is a process where you can have your child support case reviewed by a judge. The Ombudsperson can help you prepare for the State Hearing.

The following types of complaints can be heard at a State Hearing:

- Your application for child support services has been denied or has not been acted upon within the required timeframe.
- Your case has been acted upon and you believe the county acted illegally.
- Child support payments were not given to you or you received the wrong amount. Or, you don't agree with the past-due amount.
- The child support agency closed your child support case.

You must request a State Hearing within **90 days** after you receive the county's response to your complaint, **or** within 90 days after you filed your complaint if the county did not respond to you.

The State Hearing will be held in your county within 30 days after the request for a hearing is received by the State Hearing Office.

If needed, translation services and reasonable disability assistance are available to you free of charge.

Some issues **cannot** be heard at a State Hearing:

- court-ordered amounts of child support
- paternity
- child custody or visitation
- spousal support
- contempt matters
- civil rights issues